

Collaboration

The steps in a process of reaching the optimum goal of collaboration are communication, contribution, coordination, cooperation, and collaboration (the 5-Cs). The Iowa Empowerment Board has adopted these definitions and they are a part of the Redesignation process.

Communication is a process based on the exchange of information and meaning. It is a crucial part of any type of productive relationship.

Contribution is an informal relationship (often called mutual support) through which parties help each other by providing some of the resources and support needed to reach their independent goals.

Coordination generally is a deliberate, joint, often formalized relationship among parties involving communication, some planning and division of roles, and longer term goals. It also contains some sharing of resources, risks and rewards for purposes of efficiency and effectiveness in achieving the complementary goals of the parties involved. Authority rests with individual parties.

Cooperation is defined as a relationship in which parties with similar interests plan together, negotiate mutual roles and share resources to achieve joint goals. Each party maintains its own identity.

Collaboration involves parties who see different aspects of a problem. They engage in a process through which they constructively explore their differences and search for (and implement) solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible (Gray, 1989). Relationships evolve toward commitment to common mission, comprehensive communication and planning, pooled resources, and shared risks and products. Authority is vested in the collaborative, rather than in individuals or an individual agency.

Steps to Collaboration

<i>Integration</i>	<i>Process</i>	<i>Structure</i>
LOW	Communication	Network, round table
	Contribution	Support group
	Coordination	Task force, council, alliance
	Cooperation	Partnership, consortium, coalition
	HIGH	Collaboration

From: "Evaluating Collaboratives" U of WI Extension